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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the satisfaction levels with the skills and training that Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) students receive. SIAST Planning, Research and Development Institutional Research & Analysis Office prepared this study. A telephone survey was conducted with 626 employers, which is a 74% increase over the last year's employer-listing figure of 359. Some of the key findings of the study are the following: (1) 96% of employers are very satisfied or satisfied with the preparation of graduates for positions in their company; (2) 75% of employers rated the general job-related knowledge of the graduates as very good or good; (3) 76% of employers rated the technical job-related skills of the graduates as very good or good; (4) 76% rate the overall job preparation as very good or good; and (5) 97% of employers stated that they would hire SIAST graduates again. Overall, the study concludes that employers continue to be satisfied with training SIAST graduates receive in their studies and the results indicate a high level if employer satisfaction with SIAST graduates. The document contains comparative figures from the survey carried out last year to this year's data. (MZ)

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Employer Survey of 2002 SIAST Graduates

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SIAST Planning, Research and Development Division
Institutional Research & Analysis Office

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Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology

Employer Survey of 2002 SIAST Graduates

Prepared by:
SIAST Planning, Research and Development
Institutional Research & Analysis Office

Report #03-06

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Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST)
Planning, Research and Development Division

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Employer Survey of 2002 SIAST Graduates

Executive Summary

In order to determine the satisfaction levels with the skills and training that SIAST students receive, a telephone survey was conducted with employers of the graduates who completed their training in the 2002 academic year. The survey was conducted in the spring of 2003, approximately eight months after students graduated from their programs. Telephone interviews were completed with the 624 employers for whom accurate contact information could be located.

Employers continue to be satisfied with the training SIAST graduates receive in their studies. The results, summarized below, indicate a high level of employer satisfaction with SIAST graduates. Of particular note are the employer satisfaction with *the preparation of SIAST graduates for positions in their companies (96%)*, and the very high proportion of employers who said they *would hire SIAST graduates again (97%)*.

Below are the highlights from the study. Comparative figures from the survey carried out last year follow this year's results.

- Ninety-six percent (96%) of responding employers are *very satisfied* or *satisfied* with the preparation of SIAST graduates for positions in their companies. (2002: 92%)
- Seventy-five percent (75%) of employers rated the *general job-related knowledge* of the graduates as *very good* or *good*. (2002: 71%)
- Seventy-six percent (76%) of employers rated the *technical job-related skills* of the graduates as *very good* or *good*. (2002: 72%)
- Seventy-six percent (76%) rated the overall job preparation as *good* or *very good*. (2002: 73%)
- Ninety-seven percent (97%) said that they *would hire SIAST graduates again*. (2002: 97%)

* * * * *

Employer Survey of 2002 SIAST Graduates

1.0 Background

In order to determine employer satisfaction levels with the skills and training that the students at SIAST receive, a telephone survey was conducted in April/May 2003 with the employers of the graduates in the 2002 academic year.

SIAST is committed to reviewing the curriculum and updating the current mix of its programs. Many forms of research are undertaken for such reviews, and two such sources are the results of the graduate employment survey of SIAST graduates and the employer survey. For the graduate employment survey recently completed, 3890 graduates were surveyed. Many employers in Saskatchewan hire more than one SIAST graduate. For the employer survey we were able to contact and successfully complete interviews with 624 employers. The names and businesses of the employers, for who accurate contact information could be located, were extracted from the SIAST graduate employment survey 2002 database.

A set of four questions with which to survey the graduates, similar to that used last year, was developed by the Institutional Research & Analysis Office at SIAST. The questions were generic in nature rather than requesting program specific information. The questionnaire is attached as Appendix A.

2.0 Response Rate

624 employers were successfully interviewed which is a 74% increase over last year's employer listing figure of 359.

3.0 Results

3.1. Highlights of Results

The highlights and the results within the report are based on the 624 completed surveys of employers of SIAST graduates. Comparative figures from the survey last year follow the figures for this year.

- Ninety-six percent (96%) of responding employers are *very satisfied* or *satisfied* with the preparation of SIAST graduates for positions in their companies. (2002: 92%)
- Seventy-five percent (75%) of employers rated the *general job-related knowledge* of the graduates as *very good* or *good*. (2002: 71%)
- Seventy-six percent (76%) of employers rated the *technical job-related skills* of the graduates as *very good* or *good*. (2002: 72%)
- Seventy-six percent (76%) rated the overall job preparation as *good* or *very good*. (2002: 73%)
- Ninety-seven percent (97%) said that they would *hire SIAST graduates again*. (2002: 97%)

3.2. Detailed Results

The following are the results of the responses to the employer survey. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number, so totals in each question may vary slightly from a 100% response rate. Employers may not have answered all questions. The responses to the questions are viewed as a 100% response rate for each separate question.

Question 1

Using a rating of *very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied, don't know*, please indicate how satisfied you are with the overall preparation of SIAST graduates for positions within your company.

Very Satisfied	*Satisfied*	*Dissatisfied*	*Very Dissatisfied*	*Don't Know/No Response*
259 (42%)	337 (54%)	16 (3%)	1 (0%)	11 (2%)

Figure 1 – Employers' Level of Satisfaction - Preparation of SIAST Graduates

Question 2

Using a rating of *very good, good, satisfactory, poor, very poor, don't know*, please indicate in each of the following specific areas how you rate the preparation of the SIAST graduates you currently employ or have recently employed.

	Very Good	*Good*	*Satisfactory*	*Poor*	*Very Poor*	*Don't Know/ No Response*
General job-related knowledge	**180** (29%)	**290** (46%)	**126** (20%)	**23** (4%)	**1** (1%)	**4** (1%)
Technical job-related skills	**198** (32%)	**275** (44%)	**117** (19%)	**22** (4%)	**0** (0%)	**12** (2%)
Ability to perform required tasks	**200** (32%)	**287** (46%)	**112** (18%)	**19** (3%)	**0** (0%)	**6** (1%)
Communication and interpersonal skills	**172** (28%)	**289** (46%)	**133** (21%)	**18** (3%)	**2** (1%)	**10** (2%)
Problem solving skills	**124** (20%)	**299** (48%)	**152** (24%)	**31** (5%)	**1** (1%)	**17** (3%)
Overall job preparation	**172** (28%)	**299** (48%)	**128** (21%)	**19** (3%)	**0** (0%)	**6** (1%)

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Figure 2 - General Job-Related Knowledge

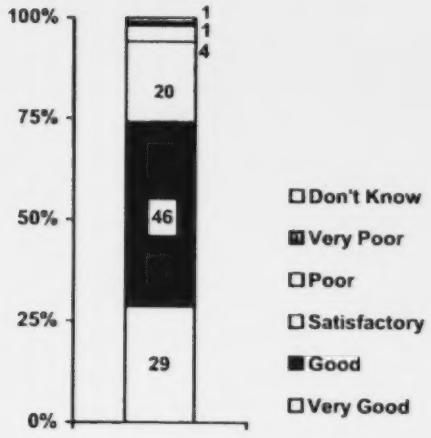


Figure 3 - Technical Job-Related Skills

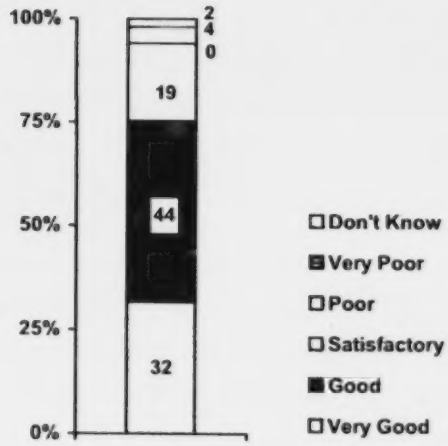


Figure 4 - Problem Solving Skills

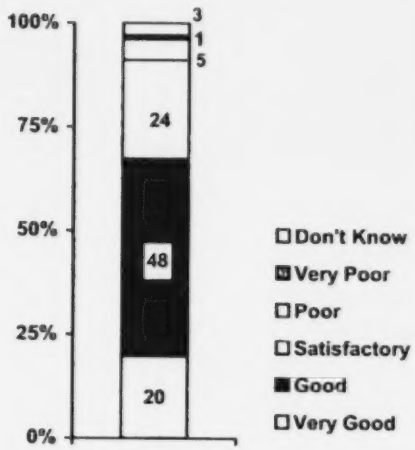
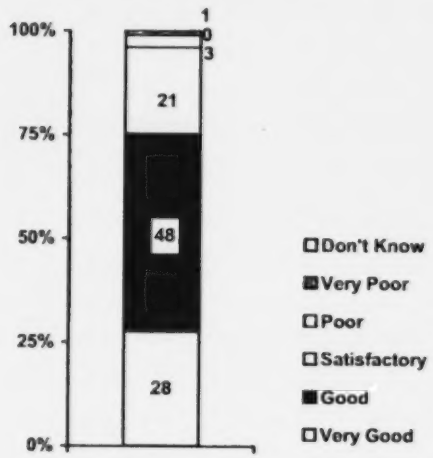


Figure 5 - Overall Job Preparation



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Question 3

Please state any suggestions you have to improve the curriculum content, instruction or method of training that could help to better prepare SIAST graduates for the world of work and particularly working within your company.

For the most part, the suggestions and comments were general in nature for all programs at SIAST. A number of the comments, though, were program specific. There was strong support for the co-operative education, work placement and practicum concept in programs. With regard to the health-related programs, there was strong support for longer practicums, more direct patient care, more hands-on acute care training (especially in the nursing programs), and training in dementia care.

Many of the employers indicated that good communication skills, organizational skills, computer skills, management skills and work ethic were very important in the workplace and that SIAST should incorporate these concepts in all programs.

Question 4

Should your organization/business need employees with similar training in the future, would you hire a SIAST graduate?

Yes		*No*		*Undecided*		*Not Applicable*	
347	97%	3	1%	7	2%	2	1%

SIAST Employer Survey 2002

[Graduates from 2002 survey – conducted spring 2003]

NAME OF EMPLOYER: _____ **(to be completed by interviewer)**

INTERVIEWER:

The Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) is conducting a study to evaluate the satisfaction of employers who have hired graduates of its career programs offered through one of the Kelsey, Palliser, Wascana and Woodland campuses, or through one of the Regional Colleges in the province.

- Did your office/business hire any SIAST graduates in the past year (January – December 2002)?

  Yes _____ No_____

  (If no, thank respondent and conclude interview; if yes, continue)

- Please refer me to the person or persons who have had opportunities to supervise the graduates of SIAST programs and who could answer five questions about evaluating the skills and training these graduates received at college? **[an example of such a person would be a graduate's supervisor or a member of the Human Resources office]**

BEGIN WHEN APPROPRIATE PERSON HAS BEEN LOCATED

Hello, the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) is conducting a study to evaluate the satisfaction of employers who have hired graduates of its career programs offered through one of the Kelsey, Palliser, Wascana and Woodland campuses, or through one of the Regional Colleges in the province. I would like to ask you five questions about your satisfaction with the skills and knowledge of the SIAST graduates that you have hired within the past year. The questions are general in nature and refer to the training the employees received while studying at SIAST, rather than to the particular personnel that you have hired in your company.

Please, may I have your name and position with the company:

NAME: _____ POSITION: _____

1. Using a rating of ***very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied, don't know***, please indicate how satisfied you are with the overall preparation of SIAST graduates for positions within your company.

   Very Satisfied | **Satisfied** | **Dissatisfied** | **Very Dissatisfied** | **Don't Know**

2. Using a rating of ***very good, good, satisfactory, poor, very poor, don't know***, please indicate in each of the following specific areas, how you rate the preparation of the SIAST graduates you currently employ or have recently employed.

	Very Good / Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know
A. General job-related knowledge					
B. Technical job-related skills					
C. Ability to perform required tasks					
D. Communication & Interpersonal Skills					
E. Problem solving skills					
F. Overall job preparation					

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3. Please state any suggestions you have to improve the curriculum content, instruction or method of training that could help to better prepare SIAST graduates for the world of work and particularly working within your company.

-
-
-

INTERVIEWER: IF SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS ARE GIVEN, PLEASE ASK THE RESPONDENT TO IDENTIFY THE NAME/TYPE OF POSITION OR PROGRAM HE/SHE IS TALKING ABOUT. YOU DO NOT WANT THE NAME OF THE PARTICULAR EMPLOYEE – BUT THE POSITION HELD BY THE EMPLOYEE, for example, Teacher Assistant, Dental Hygienist, Automotive Service Technician

NAME/TYPE OF POSITION: _____

4. Should your organization/business need employees with similar training in the future, would you hire a SIAST graduate?

Yes	No	Undecided

If you indicated that you would not hire a SIAST graduate in the future, please comment why:

_____
_____
_____
_____

5. Please state any other general comments you wish to make:

_____
_____
_____
_____

WE VALUE THE INPUT OF INDUSTRY TO ASSIST US IN KEEPING OUR PROGRAMS CURRENT AND APPROPRIATE FOR THE WORKPLACE

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING THE TIME TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS

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